

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

UNCLAS STRASBOURG 17

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TASS: COE, PFOR, XG, EGEN.

SUBJECT: COUNCIL OF EUROPE ASSEMBLY DISCUSSES JEWISH COMMUNITY
OF USSR, POLITICAL SITUATION IN SPAIN, AND CHANNEL TUNNEL.

1. ON JANUARY 28 AND 29 THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE S PARLIAMENTARY
ASSEMBLY DISCUSSED THE PLIGHT OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN THE
U.S.S.R., THE POLITICAL CLIMATE IN SPAIN, AND OTHER ISSUES.

2. DRAWING ON EVIDENCE FROM A REPORT BY LIBERAL PER AHLMARK OF
SWEDEN, A SERIES OF SOME 20 SPEAKERS IN THE ASSEMBLY WERE SHARPLY
CRITICAL OF THE SOVIET UNION S TREATMENT OF ITS JEWISH CITIZENS
AND ESPECIALLY OF SOVIET EMIGRATION POLICY WITH RESPECT TO ITS
JEWISH POPULATION. IN A STATEMENT SYMPTOMATIC OF THE ASSEMBLY S
INABILITY TO TRANSLATE ITS WISHES INTO ACTION, ONE MEMBER

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EXPRESSED HIS HOPE THAT OUR DEBATE HERE THIS EVENING WILL

REAWAKEN THE CONSCIENCE OF EUROPE IN THIS MATTER AND PERHAPS REKINDLE SOME SPARK OF HUMANITY IN THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF THE RUSSIAN LEADERS. (COMMENT: WITH SIMILAR INNOCENCE, AHLMARK S REPORT CONCLUDED IT IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND WHY THE SOVIET UNION, IN A PERIOD OF A GENERAL SEARCH FOR DETENTE.... MAINTAINS A POLICY THAT IS NOT ONLY CONTRARY TO THE WORLD ACCEPTED NORMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, BUT IS ALSO CONTRARY TO ITS OWN PHILOSOPHY AND LAWS . END COMMENT). THE ASSEMBLY S RECOMMENDATION ON THE MATTER NOTED THAT BOTH THE GENERAL SITUATION OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN THE SOVIET UNION AND THAT OF JEWS WISHING TO EMIGRATE HAD DETERIORATED SINCE 1974, ALLUDED BOTH TO THE UN RESOLUTION OF 10 NOVEMBER 1975 AND TO THE HELSINKI DECLARATION ON SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, AND REAFFIRMED THE ASSEMBLY S PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS INVITING MEMBER GOVERNMENTS TO URGE THE SOVIETS TO END HARASSMENT OF THE JEWS. ALTHOUGH THE RESOLUTIONS WERE PASSED UNANIMOUSLY, TWO FRENCH DELEGATES (SOCIALIST ANDRE BOULLOCHE AND COMMUNIST SERGE BOUCHENY) ABSTAINED. NEITHER CHALLENGED THE TRUTHFULNESS OF AHLMARK S REPORT, BUT BOTH CHARACTERIZED THE RESOLUTION AS BLATANTLY ANTI-SOVIET.

3. IN A VARIETY OF WRITTEN DECLARATIONS RELATED TO THE ISSUE ABOVE (HUMAN RIGHTS IN EASTERN EUROPE) , 12 MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY CHARGED THE USSR WITH FLOUTING THE HELSINKI DECLARATION, 12 MEMBERS EXPRESSED THEIR SOLIDARITY WITH RESPECT TO THE STRUGGLE OF ANDREI SACHAROV, AND 17 MEMBERS CASTIGATED THE GDR FOR DISRESPECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS, PARTICULARLY AS CONCERNS EMIGRATION TO THE WEST.

4. ITALIAN CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT GIUSEPPE REALE PRESENTED A RELATIVELY FACTUAL RATHER THAN ANALYTICAL REPORT TO THE ASSEMBLY ON THE SITUATION IN SPAIN. (COMMENT: REALE DID, HOWEVER, CONTEND THAT LIKE MOROCCO, THE UNITED STATES APPEAR TO HAVE SEIZED THE ADVANTAGE OF SPAIN S PARALYSIS AND CONFUSION IN ORDER TO IMPOSE THEIR TERMS WITH RESPECT TO THE AMERICAN MILITARY PRESENCE IN SPAIN. YET, IN THE SAME SECTION REALE SUGGESTS THAT SPAIN WILL PROBABLY BE ABLE TO COAX THE U.S. INTO GIVING HER INCREASED MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID - HARDLY AN INDICATION OF THE U.S. BEING ABLE TO IMPOSE ITS TERMS . IN ANY EVENT, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT REALE PREPARED HIS REPORT BEFORE THE RECENT KISSINGER UNCLASSIFIED

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TRIP TO SPAIN. END COMMENT.) THE SUBSEQUENT DEBATE SUGGESTED THAT PARLIAMENTARIES OF ALL IDEOLOGICAL HUES WERE DISSATISFIED WITH SPAIN S EFFORTS AT LIBERALIZATION TO DATE. IN THIS CONNECTION, CRITICISM OF PRIME MINISTER ARIAS SPEECH OF JANUARY 28 WAS UNIVERSAL. (TO BE SURE CERTAIN DELEGATES DID REMIND THE ASSEMBLY THAT SOME DEPARTURES FROM FRANQUISM HAD BEEN MADE.) IN ITS RESOLUTION, THE ASSEMBLY PROMISED TO FOLLOW THE POLITICAL EVOLUTION OF SPAIN CLOSELY. MOREOVER, IT

CALLED UPON ALL DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL PARTIES IN MEMBER COUNTRIES TO PROVIDE THEIR SPANISH COUNTERPARTS WITH ALL POSSIBLE ASSISTANCE. (COMMENT: AS AT LEAST ONE DELEGATE NOTED, SINCE THE RAPID POLITICAL EVOLUTION ON THE IBERIAN PENINSULA BEGAN IN 1974, THE ASSEMBLY HAS BEEN GENTLER IN ITS REMARKS ON PORTUGAL THAN ON SPAIN - A REFLECTION, AMONG OTHER THINGS, OF THE BITTER MEMORIES THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR HAS LEFT IN THE MINDS OF MANY WESTERN EUROPEAN DEMOCRATS.)

5. BOTH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE SPANISH OPPOSITION AND OF THE REGIME WITNESSED THE DEBATE. IN A SUBSEQUENT PRESS CONFERENCE, THE OPPOSITION LEADERS - NOTABLY SANTIAGO CARRILLO OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY - CALLED FOR THE FULL DEMOCRATIZATION OF SPAIN AND, MORE SPECIFICALLY, FOR THE OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF ALL POLITICAL PARTIES AND FOR A GENERAL AMNESTY. THE DELEGATION FROM THE CORTES, ON THE OTHER HAND, CAUTIONED AGAINST OVERLY RAPID CHANGE, WHICH COULD LEAD TO THE PORTUGALIZATION OF SPAIN.

6. AMONG OTHER, LESS CONTROVERSIAL MATTERS TAKEN UP BY THE ASSEMBLY IN THESE SITTINGS WAS THE QUESTION OF THE CONSTRUCTION OF A CHANNEL TUNNEL (CHUNNEL). THE ASSEMBLY CONCLUDED IN ITS RESOLUTION THAT THE CHUNNEL WOULD NOT ONLY FORGE STRONGER POLITICAL AND CULTURAL LINKS BETWEEN BRITAIN AND THE CONTINENT, BUT WOULD ALSO BRING ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES TO BOTH. INDEED, THE ASSEMBLY SUGGESTED THAT THE BENEFITS THAT WOULD ACCRUE TO THE CONTINENT FROM THE CHUNNEL WERE SUCH AS TO JUSTIFY CONSIDERABLE FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION IN THE PROJECT BY THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES.

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